

# ignore this book

songs of discomfort

catherine b. krause

# ignore this book

**Songs of Discomfort**

**Catherine B. Krause**

2nd Edition

**CC-Zero Public Domain Dedication**

To the extent possible under law, the author has waived all  
copyright and related or neighboring rights to *Ignore This Book:*  
*Songs of Discomfort.*



## **Acknowledgements**

Thanks to Scars Publications for first publishing "Violation" and "The Herd".

Thanks to Oddball Magazine for first publishing "Tomatoes", "Kicking" and "Atomic".

Thanks to (s)wordplay for first publishing "Classifieds (remix)".

Thanks to Uut Poetry for first publishing "24 quirky cultural tidbits about Japan from this Westerner's perspective", "behind circuit unattached", "nights", "rain (remix)" and "26 Unexpected Places to Find Satan".

Thanks to One Sentence Poems for first publishing "Goals" and "Cosmetinaut".

Thanks to Round Up Writer's Zine for first publishing "Dream?", "an r for he" and "HAIK, ooooh".

Thanks to Red Booth Review for first publishing "April".

Thanks to NYQ Books for publishing "Untitled" in the anthology *Rabbit Ears: TV Poems*.

Thanks to 1947 Journal for first publishing "Addy".

## Contents

1. Air
2. The Herd
3. Atomic
4. Sick
5. Fungus Arm
6. Addy
7. Blind
8. Violation
9. Out of Water
10. Unfamiliar Faces
11. Classifieds (remix)
12. three uutku
13. his edened her
14. Jobless
15. Starving mutts
16. nights
17. 24 quirky cultural tidbits about Japan from this  
Westerner's perspective
18. Goals
19. an r for he
20. Kicking
21. Untitled
22. Dream?
23. behind circuit unattached
24. Wiser
25. Tomatoes
26. sole search
27. Just 2 Weeks Learning Esperanto Can Get You Months  
Ahead In Your Target Language
28. Cosmetinaut
29. HAIK, oooh
30. rain (remix)
31. April
32. 26 Unexpected Places to Find Satan

## **Air**

A loud, whining gasp, a smack and a cut. Surrender to sleep, then another loud, whining gasp. Several more loud, whining gasps and another cut. Every day more and more smacks, more and more cuts until she's numb. The sudden awareness of sex.

## **The Herd**

The ruthless beaks of the chickens, the ravenous appetites of the mother rodents, the giant erect cocks of the elephants congregating around the watering hole to exchange gossip.

## **Atomic**

Struggling to finish before the bite but here it comes – devouring every taste bud – sweating and gulping down ice water – biting down hard on bread – swallowing chocolate syrup – the bite doesn't stop – head to the toilet and touch – another bite – rub the eyes – another – crying and crying – crying to the reward pathways of the brain.



## **Sick**

The wet handkerchiefs invading the pale garbage can. The sixteen-ounce plastic bottle of mucus on the shelf. The sink piled high with soup bowls, the dish of choice for the occasion. The night reflecting her half-naked body in the window. The fan sticking its tongue out and saying "ahhhhhhhh."

## **Fungus Arm**

The little navy arms on the white wallpaper flex their muscles menacingly from the breathing wall. A river flows past rocks in the Sierra Nevada, the stool rapidly encroaching on the rest of the room. Her arms and legs weigh a million tons. A deep feeling in her gut cries out, "It's time to defecate."

## **Addy**

Ten cigarettes sucked down in an hour. The desert wasteland in her mouth. The panicked hummingbird in her chest. The conversations leading nowhere. The essay that seems better-written than it is. The sense of elation crashing through the door at the end of her foot. The imaginary people searching through her drawers. The voices yelling at her to get her shit together. The woman who talks to the plants. The pills, the pills, the pills.

## **Blind**

Her fingers fumble and find nothing, falling all over the place like the ink from a decapitated pen. Terms like "up" and "down" no longer describe the world as she walks home in shame. Where could they be? A stale taste in her mouth says "Stop!" as she starts to cry.

## **Violation**

The spike: the most ripping of rips, over and over, harder and harder. The screams. The attempts by the perpetrator to make it sexy. The attempts by the victim to cope. The blood, the feces, the lost control. The traitorous orgasm.

## **Out of Water**

Not a parking spot to be found that day nor, somehow, any place open at that time of night besides the church, her destination. Three stations of gospel music provide the only entertainment. Parking illegally in the driveway, she knocks on the door and someone answers, "There's no meeting here tonight." The firmament opens up; she runs for her umbrella.

## **Unfamiliar Faces**

She's hiding from all the new people, worried she'll say the wrong thing. The shakiness in her legs. The steel bar in her shoulders. The invisible hand constricting her vocal cords. The whispers outside: what are they saying? What do they mean? The sense of defeat's inevitability. The fear- the terror of being outside.

## **Classifieds (remix)**

I

Journal for sale,  
well-kept, preserved,  
never written in,  
a crabless hermit of words  
that never existed  
about the women I dream of  
every night, whose eyes  
are from Ohio but whose heart  
is in Indiana; the beginning  
of Spring is over.

II

What's missing is  
a poetic role model:  
someone to imitate and  
call it learning.  
If I could just see what  
you do with pen and paper,  
I'm sure I could make it too:  
at least on paper.  
My dog has lost its owner,  
a brown-haired girl with a German  
last name. If you find her,  
tell her she can do better.

III

If you want I'll throw in  
these poetry books.  
They belonged to me,  
but I did nothing with them  
because they're indecipherable.  
Contact me personally  
and I'll trade them for instant rice.  
Don't make me resort  
to eating my own poetry.



I did that once.  
I thought there were drugs  
hidden in the pages.

### **three uutku**

teabags  
tingling  
heavy eyelids

pot of coffee  
chipping nail polish  
sans coups d'État

without grandma  
hardly an embassy  
on Twitter

**his edened her**

in the maize of life  
she butterfly south  
to winter in equatorial passion  
& listen to the listen of chirping chirpers  
dancing in the light of the dancelight

## **Jobless**

The theme from Days of Our Lives  
becomes unbearably familiar  
so it's time for a change of scenery.  
Mom suggests I write a romance novel;  
my sponsor cracks, "That'd be one messed up story."  
A familiar voice whispers, "You need me for this,"  
so I decide to see if Stefano's still kicking.

## **Starving Mutts**

Starving mutts bring down the Twin Towers.

Logic on the waves of the real.

A pause.

Underlying subtexts sub the text.

It's time to put on my big girl

panties and stop boiling the ruby-red pot.

Pigs in their outfits too small,

bellies hanging out,

skirts unwashed,

boils on their skin.

This is not computer-generated

unless you consider

that the mind is schizophrenic.

**nights**

they considered man  
to come close to rainwaves,  
playing this candle-lit breakfast on its skin.

## **24 Quirky Cultural Tidbits About Japan From This Westerner's Perspective**

This market is saturated with the butts of keyboards  
who crush up the colleagues huddled around my desk,  
feeding adrenaline to our Future like it's a matter  
of the ravenous, uncaring horde.

Dandelions can't be making up ten million gulags,  
talking to the asphalt on South Indian streets,  
your face a bloody nose, your trip back home  
the elucidated promise of underlings.

## **Goals**

Mom's goal was to graduate college  
but dad's goal was mom.



## **an r for he**

i'm glad to meet you & wet  
a proud Hungarian singing at me  
you say you're a preacher  
and gave up hunting (thanks?)  
what's that about the Jews?

the sissy fluffs the businessman  
you say you're what now?

the slave inserts the fist  
you'll try anything once?

the Madame spanks the sissy  
fuck you, i'm a child of God  
oh God

i have a voice

shut up! don't make any noise!  
I'm taking my balls

I'm the only one who loves you  
and I'm going home.

## **Kicking**

A big banana kicked the bath  
and watched the Watch unearth the earth  
beneath the moss and lists of life,  
the crud that cluttered up her drain,  
so when the weathered earthly scourge  
was fully, wholly menacing  
she tallied up her soul to find  
the understanding laryngitic thought  
beneath the babbler.

## Untitled

first down

BUY A CAR!

second down

GET SOME BEER!

third down

ASK YOUR DOCTOR IF VIAGRA IS RIGHT FOR YOU!

fourth down

## **Dream?**

my friend his mother had a boyfriend  
he had long hair he had two cats  
we swung them around by their tails  
and then we were in a small room naked  
he had long hair  
there was angry cursing  
we swung them around by their tails  
he had long hair  
it was a small room  
my hair was pulled  
he had two cats  
my ass was fucked  
we swung them around by their tails  
he had long hair  
my ass was fucked  
he had two cats  
but i don't think i sucked

## **behind circuit unattached**

The robot's intergalactic behindquarters were unattached to its wingdinkum. The unforeseen complications of this, recorded in Xeltron's famous epic poem on the Fourth Intergalactic Military Escalation, included:

1. several broken toes;
2. the launching of seven iconic whistles at Neptune;
3. the early birthday of Chronos Hopper;
4. the second coming of Beatlemania.

On this last note, it is worth mentioning that because of the Fox Incident, Ringo Starr did not appear in the new lineup, being replaced instead by Meg White of The White Stripes. The new album was a dated and formulaic but brilliantly put-together work of post-punk, and the fans ate it straight to the rind.

## Wiser

Let's pretend for a moment, computer,  
that it's just you and me,  
like the good old days  
before we connected to our first BBS  
when we learned how to type using Print Shop  
and later progressed to MS-DOS EDIT.  
(It was thought back then that if you needed  
a nice-looking interface, you were not  
Sufficiently Advanced.)

Oh those were the days, computer,  
before the NSA could read this poem that I'm writing,  
when Alexis indirectly taught me how to program  
(all the ungrateful haters still call her the old name).  
Just for a moment, computer,  
let's disconnect the Ethernet,  
like the good old times,  
and hide away from the world.

## **Tomatoes**

Lost and alone as she was,  
Anna did company invite that day  
and tossed she tomatoes at walls  
as up she vacuumed the mess  
but drop the floor did on that day  
and came out from under her everything  
so years did it take for the cleaning  
and much did she sew for the reaping.

## **Sole Search**

no i will not let you come to space with me for  
no one reads the face of the girl who is not there



## **Just 2 Weeks Learning Esperanto Can Get You Months Ahead in Your Target Language**

I hate it when you can't look me in the eye.  
The mothership is our one and only bird.  
Gandalf finally moved to the second pool table  
and pretended to marry.

You see it when you look out your window,  
and remember it when your eyes are closed.  
You're going from third to second-  
and open your gates as well.

## **Cosmetinaut**

She covers her arms and legs  
with lye every day,  
burning and itching and thinking  
“I’m gonna look so good.”

**HAIK, oooh**

sheltered from the snow  
watch me lovingly vomit  
on your eight-inch dick

## **rain (remix)**

They considered man to come close to rainwaves  
underneath the little blue blanket  
of the boiling pot.

Pigs in their little blue blankets  
drink Red Bull and vodka  
from the pot of boil.

The ruby red boil on its skin.  
They considered man to venture on its rainwaves,  
every drop of rain a candle-lit break.

## **April**

The next day is always hard,  
remembering chocolate pie  
and the poem's meaning,  
trying not to lose your gifts:

a birthday suit extension,  
a new morning gown,  
a top-heavy woman's top,  
lukewarm coffee,  
cut your hand shaving.

The computer is a tool  
bred out from the earth  
for higher purposes than  
using the desire to lose.

## **26 Unexpected Places to Find Satan**

She scowled at the concept of “socks” when she got a puppy.  
The very idea made her want to microwave pineapples.  
Nail polish was something she didn’t believe existed.  
Now she’s aware that the papers on her floor are covered in  
wasps.

It’s like on one foot she has half of her pants,  
but on the other she wants to hold onto snakes  
and autographed poetry chapbooks.  
The two cannot co-exist. One has to laugh at the sunset.

She either needs to completely repair her computer monitor  
or sit in the light from her own mobile phone.

**Catherine B. Krause** is queer, disabled, neurodivergent, transgender, and a survivor of rape, homelessness, and psychiatry. She was born in Indianapolis, raised in Youngstown, Ohio and released this book while working for food and rent in Adams Morgan, Washington, D.C.. She is a strong supporter of the free content and free software movements and a strong opponent of capitalism, hence all of her poems are released under a Creative Commons Zero license.